involving nearly 300 lives over the last few years, and that local resident's persistent complaints lodged with the Railway authorities have not fructified at all as reported in Lokmat dated the 17th January, 2003; and

(b) if so, whether Government would adopt any effective measures so that continuous loss of human lives through accidents could be eliminated in this case and simultaneously take adequate care in similar cases elsewhere in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE INTHE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) No, Sir. In fact, there is a Railway arch bridge at Narendra Nagar, South of Ajni Railway Station at K.m. 831/13-14 with two spans constructed for drainage of flood water. But of two spans, one span is being used by public as an under bridge and, through the other span nallah is flowing. There is no record with the Railways of any accident having occurred here with loss of human lives.

(b) This under bridge is being used unauthorisedly by Road users since the opening is to cater to flood water and Railways cannot take any responsibility in this regard. The State Governments have to sponsor proposals for a proper Road Over/Under Bridge which can be considered on deposit terms.

Adoption of advanced technology in Railways

423. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the present status of technology adopted by Indian Railways as compared to that adopted in other developing and developed countries;

(b) by what time Indian Railways would attain the advanced technology to match with those of other countries; and

(c) what step have been taken in that direction to avoid human and mechanical failures as the reasons for rail accidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE INTHE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) Technology adopted over Indian Railways is comparable with other developing/developed countries. However, adoption of latest technology from other developing and developed countries is a continuous process. The technology adopted has to match the geographical and socio-economic conditions of the country.

(b) The Indian Railways is adopting the advanced technology to match with those of other countries as and when required to suit the requirement and the need. Our requirement for Rail transportation differs greatly with other advanced nations, and, accordingly, technology upgrade is done continuously as per the need.

(c) With a view to contain human factors in causing Railway accidents, psychological aptitude tests are used at the time of selection/promotion of staff in critical safety category. An automatic device to switch on locomotive flasher light has been developed and installed on locomotives. Recently anti-collision device has also been developed. Besides, following steps have been taken to avoid accidents on account of human and mechanical failures:—

(i) Track circuiting of all routes in phased manner.

(ii) Progressive increase in interlocking and provision of telephones at level-crossing gates.

Profits by New Railway Zones

424. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE:
SHRI JIBON ROY:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether newly created Railway Zones are making profits;

(b) if so, the details thereof, zone-wise;

(c) what was the earning of Eastern Railway prior to creation of Hazipur zone; and

(d) what is the present earning of Eastern Railway?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) and (b) The profitability of the units under the Railways *viz.*, Zonal Railways is judged by the Operating Ratio which is the ratio of the Total Working Expenses of the Railway to the Gross Traffic Earnings. Consequent upon the creation of new Zones, the precepts forming the bases for apportionment of expenditure and earnings among the Railways are still being finalised. Pending this, the Operating Ratio of newly created Zones cannot be worked out. Operating Ratio of parent Zone will also undergo a change.